

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Finely divided hard bodies comprising a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale which is present directly on a finely divided substrate as impermeable coating in the form of one or more layers without the presence of an interlayer between the substrate and the impermeable coating, wherein the finely divided substrate comprises natural or synthetic mica, metal flakes, glass flakes, TiO₂ flakes or iron oxide flakes.
2. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1, which are pigments.
3. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1, wherein the finely divided substrate is in flake form.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to claim 1, which are obtained by wet-chemical precipitation of a primary layer comprising one or more layers on a finely divided substrate and subsequent calcination with formation of an impermeable coating in the form of one or more layers of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale on the substrate or by single or repeated coating of a finely divided substrate with a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale by a CVD and/or PVD process.
6. (Currently Amended) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1, wherein the finely divided substrate comprises natural or synthetic mica or ~~metal flakes,~~ ~~glass flakes, SiO₂ flakes, TiO₂ flakes or iron oxide flakes.~~
7. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 6, wherein the metal flakes are flakes of aluminum, titanium, bronze, steel or silver.

8. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1, wherein the material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale comprises aluminum oxide, zirconium oxide or a mixture thereof.

9. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to claim 1, wherein the thickness of the coating applied to a finely divided substrate in the form of one or more layers of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale is 40 to 400 nm.

10. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to claim 1, wherein the finely divided bodies have additionally been coated with one or more transparent, semi-transparent and/or opaque layers comprising a metal oxide, metal oxide hydrate, metal suboxide, metal, metal fluoride, metal nitride, metal oxynitride or a mixture thereof.

11. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 10, wherein a further layer of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale has additionally been applied.

12. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 11, wherein the thickness of the further layer of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale is 20 to 80 nm.

13. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1, wherein the finely divided substrate is provided with an impermeable coating in the form of one or more layers of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 13, wherein a primary layer comprising one or more layers is precipitated onto a finely divided substrate by a wet-chemical method and calcined with formation of an impermeable coating in the form of one or more layers of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale or a

substrate is coated one or more times with a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale by a CVD and/or PVD process.

16. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 13, wherein the material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale comprises aluminum oxide, zirconium oxide or a mixture thereof.

17. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 13, wherein the finely divided hard bodies are additionally coated with one or more transparent, semi-transparent and/or opaque layers comprising a metal oxide, metal oxide hydrate, metal suboxide, metal, metal fluoride, metal nitride, metal oxynitride or a mixture thereof.

18. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 17, wherein the one or more transparent, semi-transparent and/or opaque layers are applied by a wet-chemical, sol-gel, CVD and/or PVD process.

19. (Previously Presented) A process according to Claim 17, wherein the applied transparent, semi-transparent and/or opaque layers are calcined.

20. (Previously Presented) A process according to claim 17, wherein a further layer of a material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale is additionally applied.

21. (Previously Presented) A method for increasing the abrasion stability of a polymer matrix comprising applying to the polymer matrix finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 21, wherein the polymer matrix is a plastic composition of article, a paint, a coating or an ink.

23. (Previously Presented) An abrasion-stable polymer matrix comprising finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 1.

24. (Previously Presented) Finely divided hard bodies according to Claim 11, wherein the material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale comprises aluminum oxide, zirconium oxide and/or a mixture thereof.

25. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 20, wherein the material having a hardness ≥ 7 on the Mohs hardness scale comprises aluminum oxide, zirconium oxide and/or a mixture thereof.